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DRAMATIZATION

IN THE

GRAMMAR GRADES

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21345

1909
Baumgardt Publishing Co.
Los Angeles, Cal.

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PREFACE

In this booklet no claim is made to originality either of subject or of method. The aim has been to bring together material which has already been tried and found valuable, with the hope of stimulating an interest in dramatization as a helpful form of school work in the grammar grades. Its worth in the primary classes has already been proved by many skillful teachers, and there seems to be no logical reason why dramatizing should not be continued through all the grades. The fourth, fifth, and sixth years are somewhat barren of interesting subject matter; it is especially difficult to find fresh and inspiring methods for the teaching of language, literature, and history, and in dramatization lie large opportunities.

Thanks are especially due to Mr. M. C. Bettinger, assistant superintendent of schools, Los Angeles, for his advice and encouragement; to Miss Kate F. Osgood, city principal of the Normal Training School, under whose enthusiastic guidance the first work in formal dramatizing was done in this school; and to Mr. Everett Shepardson, supervisor of the Normal Training School, for his kind permission to use the illustrations and references on dramatization published in *Children's Literature*.

WHY SHALL WE DRAMATIZE

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All children love to make believe. "Let us play Queen Elizabeth and Walter Raleigh. I will be queen, and you must put your coat upon the ground for me to walk over. Then you must come before my throne upon your knees and I will put my sword on your shoulder and say, 'I dub thee knight'."

Such plays as this are acted over and over again in every home and upon every playground. Why not in every schoolroom? It is the most natural thing in the world for a little child to take the place of another, to think his thoughts, to speak his words, to act as he does, for dramatic instinct is the happy possession of every normal child. There is no child so poorly endowed but he has some gleam of imagination, some portion of the blessed heritage by which he becomes in his own person great, heroic, and beautiful. It is true that some children seem so earth-bound, so restricted, so cramped, that few signs of dramatic instinct can be detected. It is for such as these that dramatization as a form of school work offers its greatest appeal. It is for the backward, the indifferent, for those who "having eyes see not, and having ears hear not," for those who need to be encouraged, stimulated, vivified, that this work is of primary importance.

In the kindergarten the dramatic instinct has long been recognized and systematically cultivated, but it is only recently that grade teachers have begun to realize the great possibilities it offers for development along

many lines. Teachers are learning that the school is life, and that all that enters into the fullness and richness of the child's world may properly have an educative value. Children need an opportunity, too, for carrying out some of their projects, and the ordinary routine of the school gives small space for this. Education tends to be mechanical, and anything which brings more spontaneity into the work is welcome. Dramatization helps to break up the deadly formality of the schoolroom by introducing something of interest to the child, something which satisfies his imagination, and exhausts his executive resources.

Without doubt the greatest value of this work lies in the cultivation of the creative imagination, in power to visualize, and in the encouragement of self-expression, but there are other important results. One of the most significant is the cultivation of the social instinct. Girls, especially, need experience in "team work." To yield to whatever condition is for the common good, to consider the whole of more importance than any of its parts, is the best possible training for children as social beings.

When teacher and pupils work together in making and presenting a play they come to know each other better than in many months of ordinary association. There is no more fortunate occasion ever afforded a teacher for studying her children. Traits of which she had no previous knowledge appear, showing to her watchful eye opportunities for service in their behalf. The awkward, indifferent lad will often appear in a new character—eager, alert, dignified. The child who has shown no initiative devises wonderful stage properties. Here self-

ishness sometimes shows itself, but far more frequently real admiration and praise for what another can do.

Dramatization also furnishes an excellent means for the correlation of subjects. Reading, literature, language, history, and geography offer much material, while sewing, sloyd, music, and drawing may be effectively combined with them. In this way a motive for construction work is given, without the forced union to which teachers sometimes feel obliged to resort. Everyone acknowledges the importance of giving restless pupils an opportunity to express themselves by doing, and abundant opportunity for cultivation of the motor activities is afforded both in the hand work and in the action of the play.

The effect of the introduction of the dramatic spirit into the teaching of reading, literature, history, and geography is to vitalize and illumine much that has been dull and spiritless. Characters are made to live, events become part of a child's own experience, and places become real which before were as vague and indefinite as "No Man's Land." But in no subject is the value of this work more apparent than in the teaching of language. If it is true that there is "No expression without impression," then the first aim in language teaching should be the making of impressions. When these have been strongly made the expression follows as a matter of course, and the teacher needs only to guide the child to correct form. There is no kind of composition work so delightful to the average child as making a play, whether it be the informal oral dialogue, or the more formal written one.

and the fact that the children enjoy the work is not the least thing to be said in its favor.

Many possibilities of home enjoyment, also, appear, for the children are eager to produce again at home what they have dramatized at school. An active, restless boy spent his spring vacation in teaching to the children of his neighborhood a play which had been written and presented by his class at school. It was given in a barn, the traditional entrance fee of a certain number of pins was charged, and the vacation was spent in profitable fun instead of idle pleasure. The wise Mrs. Alcott encouraged her four "Little Women" to write and act their simple plays, and many other wise mothers since have shared their children's joy in this delightful form of home amusement.

HOW SHALL WE DRAMATIZE

In order that dramatizing may be carried on with the greatest possible benefit to children, certain of its important phases should be carefully considered. First of all, the teacher must realize that the finished production of a play is not the chief end in view. Awakened interest, improved oral and written language, and greater freedom from self-consciousness constitute the valuable "by-product" of this work. In interpreting and presenting a play already written some of these results are obtained, but the value of dramatization is greatly increased when children write their own plays. Much of the composition work in school is done with no apparent end in view. Here is a motive adequate for the most ambitious and stimulating to the most slothful. To write a play of their very own, to be given by themselves, satisfies the sense of ownership so strong in children, and at the same time offers to the teacher a large opportunity for the cultivation of correct form and expression. By the time children reach the seventh or eighth grade they are ready to begin the study and interpretation of the great dramas and the writing of plays will give place to other forms of composition work in line with their new interests.

In the selection of materials for dramatization great care should be used. The supply of suitable matter is so abundant that there is no excuse for using anything of inferior quality. The impression made by a story when read is considerable, but this impression is increased

greatly when the story is acted. For this reason it is unwise to dramatize even good pieces of literature if they contain incorrect English. (A dialect story may be a bit of real literature, and charming in its way, but it is entirely unsuited for dramatization in the grades.) Language forms are soon forgotten when merely read, but they become firmly fixed in the memory by frequent repetition, enforced by the living power of the play. Only when correct English has become the habit through years of careful exercise can one safely indulge in ungrammatical uses. All the best literature is by no means suitable for dramatization. Much of it contains no element of drama. Often the choice and beautiful imagery would be injured by giving it a dramatic setting. Sometimes the thread of the story is too delicate, too subtle; sometimes the incidents cannot be linked together except by over-much explanation. A simple plot, plenty of life and action, a worthy conclusion—these are the prime requisites, and they may all be found in the good old myths, legends, and adventures of the world's classics.

Again, the teacher should bear in mind that dramatization, like all good things, may easily be overdone. To dramatize indiscriminately, or to dramatize too frequently, may reduce a piece of distinctive work to the level of every day drudgery. The wise teacher will keep just enough of this work on hand to spur her pupils to notable effort. Informal dramatizing may frequently be incorporated in the reading, geography, history, or language lesson, but the more formal work of writing a play should not be allowed to monopolize more than its

proper share of time. One play a term, written and presented, with the accompanying preparation of costumes and scenery, is sufficient, but not more than any teacher can carry on advantageously. The length of the play may be limited by the amount of time a teacher feels that she can give to it. A play of one act and one scene is best for a first attempt. This will show the nature of the work, and will indicate to the teacher the lines of future development.

Scenery and costume are valuable aids in creating the correct atmosphere of a play, but the imagination can form the desired images with slight assistance. Only such simple costumes are necessary as will teach the dress of the time, or will serve to portray a character. A fur rug thrown over the shoulder of Hercules becomes as effective as the original lion's skin, and a cap and a kerchief make Priscilla a member of the Pilgrim band. The only way to avoid the danger of display is to keep the costumes extremely simple, but some slight change helps to make a child less self-conscious, and enables him to take the personality of another. It would not be advisable to allow a child to hire a costume, or to spend more than a few cents for that which is used in constructing one. His ingenuity can devise ways and means of using materials already in his possession, and of suiting them to his needs. Simplicity should be the keynote in costume and scenery.

There is great temptation to give the principal parts to the children who would do the work most creditably. It must always, however, be borne in mind that dramatization has a disciplinary value for each child, in curbing

the forward, in encouraging the timid, in strengthening the weak, and in binding all into one social whole. If it is carried on in this spirit of service, it fully justifies itself, but if deflected from its high use, becoming merely a method for entertaining visitors by the display of dramatic talent, it would better have never been undertaken.

The teacher finds many happy surprises when once she begins to study her unprepossessing material. She finds that she has many who can successfully undertake the part which she at first felt could be assigned to one only. A happy division of labor may often be made by having one group write the play, another act it, another write invitations, while others attend to costumes and scenery. This arrangement by groups is especially successful in a school composed of several grades. The older children enjoy writing a play for the younger ones to act, while others supply the accessories.

A teacher should neither expect nor require highly finished work. If it bears the mark of childish effort it will necessarily contain many errors,—errors of proportion, of structure, and of expression—just as do all other forms of children's compositions. The teacher should be a guide, leading the pupils from "better up to best," rather than a gardener, pruning until little of the original stalk remains. In acting the play no effort should be spared to lead each child to understand and appreciate the character he represents, but on no account should the teacher's interpretation be forced upon him, nor should he be over-criticised. Freedom and naturalness should characterize this part of the work. Imita-

tion and affectation are to be avoided by every possible means.

The spontaneous dramatization of stories from the reading books and from general literature, so admirably carried on in many primary classes, is an excellent foundation for more formal work in the intermediate and upper grades. For the first written work it is well to recast in dramatic shape some piece of literature full of incident and conversation. This may be followed by other selections containing more narration and less dialogue, the latter to be supplied by the children. A more difficult undertaking is to supply the entire conversation, having only the skeleton of the story given, or to create an entire play founded upon some historical event. Important occurrences, or those portions of history needing special interpretation should be selected for this purpose.

✓ In the sixth grade of the Normal Training School the following method was used in writing "The Pilgrims." Plays by this name had already been written in several schools, but this was founded upon different incidents from those which had been previously used.

In preparation for writing, a careful study of the Pilgrims was made. It was simple and graphic enough to suit the understanding of the children of this grade. Among the books supplying material were these: *The Pilgrims in Their Three Homes*, *Pilgrims and Puritans*, *Old Times in the Colonies*, *Romance of Colonization*, *Documents Illustrative of American History*, and *Standish of Standish*.

The children were interested in the language of the early times, and brought into the class many expressions

culled from the books they read. Some of these were used in the play, but it was necessary to restrict somewhat the unbridled use of Pilgrim speech. The clothing, food, shelter, method of travel, and peculiar customs became subjects of thoughtful inquiry. Many pictures were found which added greatly to the conception of these matters of detail.

When the class had become sufficiently familiar with the Pilgrim story and thoroughly imbued with its spirit, they began to write the play. At the start a search was made for dramatic incidents, and many opinions prevailed as to the most interesting ones. Finally it was decided that the first act should give the story of the Pilgrims in Holland at the time when they made their decision to go to America. For the second act the signing of the compact in the cabin of the Mayflower was selected. This incident was particularly dramatic, and in all the rehearsals it never lost its impressiveness. The last act was not determined until after the first and second had been finished. The historical characters to be introduced into the play and, in general, what each should say and do, were then agreed upon.

Much of the dialogue was written by children and teacher together, one child giving a part, the others offering criticisms and suggestions. It was afterwards placed upon the blackboard and its merits still further discussed by the class. Some portions were acted first and then written, as the words came warm and glowing from the speaker's lips. Other portions, written by the children at home, were read and criticised by the pupils.

and approved or rejected. The best parts of several pupils' work were often combined.

The children were so desirous of writing something worth presenting that all individual preferences were laid aside, and their thought was wholly of the common good. When questions arose, the teacher left the decision, as far as practicable, to the children, guiding them skillfully to logical thinking, keeping them within the realm of probability, but letting the work be theirs, and not her own. To have the acts and words of the characters true to historic conception was a primary consideration. Whatever could be represented by action—by gestures, looks, smiles, or frowns—was shown in this way.

Before a scene was finally accepted it was acted, the parts being assigned to different groups of children. A healthy rivalry was established, one group seeking to outdo another group in interpreting a character. By this means many different children were given an opportunity to take part. This trial of a scene tested its value, and many of their mistakes were here corrected, the children being very quick to see what should be substituted or omitted.

After the final assignment of parts had been made, it was often necessary to change. As each child knew not only one part, but often several, it was always easy to find some one to represent whatever character the exigencies of the moment required. Thus, when Elder Brewster was absent, John Howland stepped in and took his place, and Capt. Jones became a Dutch boy upon a moment's notice. When every part can be taken by at least two pupils, no child has an undue sense of his own

importance, having no reason for thinking that the play can not proceed without him. The scene in the cabin of the Mayflower gave an opportunity to bring in all the pupils—a most desirable condition in any play.

When the last act was under discussion there was much difficulty experienced in finding a satisfactory ending. One day the teacher read from *Standish of Standish* the story of the refusal of the Pilgrims to return to England with Capt. Jones. This appealed to the children as a strong ending for the play, and the last scene is an adaptation of this chapter.

The children wished, as far as possible, to wear the dress of the Pilgrims. Accordingly the boys wore broad collars and sashes, with high gray hats—the latter made in their manual training and drawing classes. The girls in the sewing class made collars and caps for themselves, and by the addition of long skirts they became veritable Pilgrim women. No scenery was used, and the imagination pictured in turn the kitchen of John Carver's house, the cabin of the Mayflower, or the common house in Plymouth.

THE PILGRIMS

[Written and presented by pupils of the sixth grade,
under the direction of Miss Jessie Paxton.]

ACT I.

Scene 1.—Leyden. [Kitchen of John Carver's house.]

Characters—JOHN CARVER, JOHN ROBINSON, MRS. WHITE, MRS. CARVER.

MRS. CARVER: I like not the way our children are growing up and learning a language not our own.

MRS. WHITE: So think I. Listen to their rude talk and boisterous play.

MRS. CARVER: I think the girls are becoming as rude as the boys. Mrs. Brewster says her daughter will not spin any more, but wants to play with the Dutch children.

MRS. WHITE: Yes, and our young people care not for the church as they should. Some of them even wish to spend the Sabbath in play.

MRS. CARVER: During the sermon their thoughts are often elsewhere. I was made ashamed yesterday when my little niece Elizabeth laughed outright in meeting.

MRS. WHITE: Mrs. Carver, hast thou heard how Brother Roger's son is to join the Dutch army? And my sister's eldest boy would become a sailor.

MRS. CARVER: Oh! there are so many troubles here. Sometimes I think we should have been better off in England.

(The men have been listening.)

JOHN ROBINSON: Nay, Mrs. Carver, think not so.

In England we should never have had peace or happiness. True, though, it is a serious matter that our children are fast becoming Dutch. John Carver, heardst thou aught of the rumor that we may have trouble with Spain?

JOHN CARVER: Yes, I was but yesterday told that the truce with that nation nears its end, and the Dutch armies are getting together.

JOHN ROBINSON: Will they not then force us to fight also? That will separate our little band. Something must be done. We cannot remain here.

JOHN CARVER: Thou speakest wisely, John Robinson. What thinkest thou that in Guinea we might worship God and have peace?

JOHN ROBINSON: Yes, but it would be too warm. Thinkest thou that America would be better?

JOHN CARVER: In America we should be free and ruled by England, and our children could be taught the English ways.

JOHN ROBINSON: I have spoken oft with the elders of this, and their hearts are turned toward that new country.

JOHN CARVER: William Brewster has said that the king will not give a charter, but gives his good consent that we may go to the new continent if we disturb not the peace of England.

JOHN ROBINSON: These are important subjects, John Carver. Come with me and we will consult with the elders.

(Exit John Carver and John Robinson.)

Scene 2.—Leyden. [Kitchen of John Carver's house. Several hours later.]

Characters—WILLIAM WHITE, JOHN CARVER, JOHN ROBINSON, MRS. WHITE, MRS. CARVER, PRISCILLA MOLINES, DESIRE, MRS. CARVER'S MAID; JOHNNY, a neighbor's boy.

(Mrs. White and Mrs. Carver talking. Enter Priscilla and Desire.)

PRISCILLA: How goes the day with thee, dear Mrs. Carver?

MRS. CARVER: Well, Priscilla.

PRISCILLA: And thou'rt as well as usual, Mrs. White?

MRS. WHITE: Ay, child.

DESIRE: It is long, Mrs. White, since thou did'st visit my cousin.

MRS. WHITE: And I should be leaving now; Desire, but I fain would learn the results of the meeting before I go. Our men tarry long, do they not, Mrs. Carver?

MRS. CARVER: Ay, Mrs. White, it is an important question which they are deciding.

PRISCILLA: And, pray, is it a question of Dutch customs or of Dutch holidays?

MRS. CARVER (smiling): Nay, my child, it is neither, but thou dost know, Priscilla, that our children are growing up as Dutch children. Even now there is much talk of trouble with Spain. We are minded to leave this country and sail for America, so our men have gathered at the meeting-house, to talk over the matter, and to decide what to do.

DESIRE (a little scornfully): Methinks it a queer

notion to go to America. I suppose it is some dreary place.

PRISCILLA: It may be a beautiful country.

DESIRE: Well, for myself, I should prefer to live here in a country we know.

PRISCILLA: Nay, Desire, talk not so. If we go to America we can be free and worship in our way, and the children will not be like the Dutch.

MRS. WHITE: Do I not hear some one crying?

MRS. CARVER (listening): It is one of the neighbor's children playing in our yard.

(Desire opens door. Enter small boy, crying.)

JOHNNY: Dat old Dutch boy hit me.

MRS. CARVER: Thou hadst better run home, Johnny.

JOHNNY: No, I vont.

PRISCILLA: Stop thy crying, Johnny, and let me tell thee where thou'rt going. Perhaps thy father and mother will take thee to America, and then the Dutch boys will not bother thee.

JOHNNY: Is that where the Indians live?

PRISCILLA: Yes, Johnny.

JOHNNY (rushing out doors): Hey, Kabby, I'm going to America. Let's play Indian.

MRS. CARVER: I believe the men are returning.

(Enter John Robinson, John Carver, Wm. White.)

MRS. WHITE: We have waited long for you to return.

✓WM. WHITE: Ay, it was a long meeting.

(All sit down.)

JOHN CARVER: We have decided to go to America.

where we can make our own laws and live as we think best. William Bradford has gone to see a Dutch captain, and perhaps we may be able to sail within a few weeks.

MRS. WHITE: I like not to go so far from our native home, for I have in mind that life in America will be hard.

JOHN ROBINSON: Fear not, for hard times will come, wherever we are.

MRS. CARVER: Methinks it will be a good day when we leave this country, for so long as we stay here we shall be troubled. If we pass the rest of our days in America it may be in peace.

✓ WILLIAM WHITE: I think the decision a wise one, and pray that we may succeed.

JOHN ROBINSON: We must succeed.

✓ WILLIAM WHITE: But I have heard that the Dutch people do not favor our going.

MRS. WHITE: And we may have some trouble in getting away.

JOHN ROBINSON: Surely the Lord will help us and bring us safely to the shores of this new country.

ACT II.

Scene 1. [The Cabin of the Mayflower.]

Characters—JOHN CARVER, WILLIAM BREWSTER, JOHN HOWLAND, CAPTAIN STANDISH (writing).

(Captain Standish throws down quill.)

CAPTAIN STANDISH: There, that is finished.

JOHN HOWLAND: Read it, Captain.

JOHN CARVER: Nay, John, first call the rest of our people that they may hear this compact.

(Exit John Howland; re-enter John Howland with the rest of the company.)

JOHN CARVER: Let us hear.

(Myles Standish reads compact.)

[The Mayflower Compact may be found in *Documents Illustrative of American History*, pp. 30, 31.]

JOHN CARVER: Well done, Myles Standish.

✓ MYLES STANDISH: Put thy name first, John Carver, as our governor; the rest of us will follow one by one. (Carver signs and hands the quill to Standish.)

JOHN CARVER: Thou next, our captain. (Standish signs.)

✓ MYLES STANDISH (handing the quill to Wm. Brewster): Our pastor next.

(Quill is handed from one to another until each has signed.)

(Enter Captain Jones near the end of the signing. He talks in an undertone to Carver and Standish.)

CAPTAIN JONES: I must land your people soon, for I cannot tarry here much longer. 'Tis time I was started for home.

CAPT. STANDISH: Ay, Captain Jones, sail off to-morrow. It matters not that thou didst promise thy help in finding us a place to land.

JOHN CARVER (with dignity): To-morrow, Captain Jones, we send ashore our first expedition to explore this new country.

CAPTAIN JONES: Ay, well. (He walks away in an angry mood.)

JOHN CARVER: Has each person signed?

CHORUS: Ay, each.

(Wm. Brewster motions the people to stand.)

WM. BREWSTER (with his right hand raised): We, the Pilgrims of the Mayflower, in the sight of God and of each other, do solemnly swear that we will obey and protect the laws authorized by this compact.

CHORUS (each person has his right hand raised): Amen.

Scene 2. [Cabin of the Mayflower, several hours later.]

Characters—WM. BREWSTER, MYLES STANDISH, JOHN CARVER, JOHN HOWLAND, STEPHEN HOPKINS, EDWARD WINSLOW, WM. BRADFORD, JOHNNY, a little boy, MRS. WHITE, MRS. CARVER, PRISCILLA MOLINES, MARY CHILTON.

(The women are sitting in the cabin, knitting. Johnny rushes in excitedly.)

JOHNNY: Oh, Mrs. Carver, the men have come back! The men have come back! We have been watching the boat for a long time, and now it is almost here. (Rushes out.)

MRS. CARVER: The men are returning from land. Oh, how I hope they have found us a home at last.

MRS. WHITE: A home at last. It sounds almost too good to be hoped for. But 'tis almost time. If this third expedition returns without having made some decision I shall give up hope of ever touching land again. (Johnny rushes in again.)

JOHNNY: Oh, they're here. They're all aboard now. Here are the Governor and the Captain.

(Enter Standish, Carver, Howland, Hopkins, Bradford, Winslow. All Greetings.)

MRS. WHITE: Tell us what you have found. We are almost unable to wait for the news.

JOHN CARVER: Bid the rest of the people come hither, John, that we may tell them what we have found.

(Exit John Howland. Re-enter John with rest of the characters.)

JOHN CARVER: The storm kept us back at first, so we did very little exploring for several days. Monday morning broke with clear skies and pleasant sea, so, refreshed by a good Sabbath rest, we started off again. We had decided to give up the search for Coppin's harbor and to explore the landlocked harbor lying before us. So we landed upon a great rock.

STANDISH: Where any but a fool would choose to land, since it is the only dry place on the beach.

HOWLAND: Ay, and a good landing it is, too. A great gray rock set ready for a stepping stone.

CARVER: It seems to us that the very place was marked out on Smith's map.

WINSLOW: Ay, the place he named Plymouth. And a far better harbor it is than old Plymouth.

BRADFORD: On landing we found cleared fields.

HOWLAND: And springs of fresh, cool water.

HOPKINS: But fuel must needs be carried further than I should fancy.

WINSLOW (dryly): We can hardly ask for tillable land and forests in one plot of ground.

BRADFORD: And fuller's clay, Master ~~Bradford~~, which served us in place of soap.

CARVER: We saw no Indians, not even their houses. They seem to have abandoned the place to us.

BRADFORD: And just the place for a town, too.

STANDISH: With a stronghold just above it, whence we could easily protect ourselves from any foes. Why, men, from a breastwork thrown upon yon hill, a man could sweep away an army.

CARVER: We have shown you our feelings, friends, and it is perhaps needless to tell you what we have decided. It seems wise to us that Plymouth, as Smith has called this place, should become our permanent home.

MRS. CARVER: A home at last.

JOHNXY (rushing out): Oh, we're going to land! We're going to land!

*Scene 3. [The Common House.]**

Characters—CAPT. STANDISH, JOHN CARVER, MR. ALBERTON, STEPHEN HOPKINS, WM. BREWSTER, WM. BRADFORD, CAPT. JONES, JOHN ALDEN, WINSLOW, SQUANTO, a strange Indian, PRISCILLA MOLINES, MARY CHILTON.

(Capt Standish sitting at a table at one side of the room. Enter Priscilla and Mary.)

PRISCILLA: Why lookest thou so sad, Mary?

MARY: But thou knowest I am sad, Priscilla.

PRISCILLA: Nay, Mary, but think of me with all my people gone. We must be brave and try to help those who are less fortunate than we. Come, Mary, let us find dear Mother Brewster and try to cheer her.

*The greater part of Scene 3 is adapted from *Standish of Standish*, and is used by permission of the publishers, Houghton-Mifflin Co.

MARY: Thou art right, my wise Priscilla, and I will come.

(Exit Mary and Priscilla.)

CAPT. STANDISH (looking up): Unselfish Priscilla. Thou dost ever forget thine own troubles in helping others.

(Enter Allerton, Hopkins, Carver, Winslow, Brewster, and Squanto. Standish, looking up, greets the new comers.)

CAPT. STANDISH: How is thy good wife, William Brewster?

WM. BREWSTER: She is always cheerful, and that, my people, must we all be. At this time when famine and plague have stricken us so sorely, if we work together and stand firm in our faith, the Lord will send us better times soon.

HOPKINS: And, in sooth, if He does not, we will all starve.

JOHN CARVER: The crops are all in and growing. If the weather so continues, another winter should find us with plenty of food.

WM. BRADFORD: The Mayflower will carry back letters and accounts of our terrible need; and, perchance, before very long we may have help from our friends.

(An Indian glides in, carrying a rattlesnake skin filled with arrows. He hands it to Myles Standish. The men look at their muskets and measure the distance between themselves and the Indian.)

SQUANTO: Big Indian chief sends war.

CARVER: Yes, my friends, this is an offer of war. How shall we answer it?

HOPKINS: Let us accept it.

ALLERTON: Can we defeat them, with half our army sleeping under yon patch of corn?

WM. BREWSTER: We must remember, my people, that we came not to kill, but to convert these red men.

✓ STANDISH: Leave this to me, for war is my field.

(He empties out the arrows and fills the skin with powder and bullets.)

✓ STANDISH: And thus do I answer their challenge.

(The men discuss the matter in an undertone. Enter John Alden and Capt. Jones at one side of the stage. John Alden is hurrying along when he meets Capt. Jones.)

CAPT. JONES: Ho Jack! Where's thy master?

ALDEN: In heaven, Master Jones, or mayhap thou meanest King James who by last accounts was in London.

JONES (bows): I crave thy pardon, worshipful Master Alden. I would fain know where thy servant, Carver, and thine other retainers, Winslow, Standish, Allerton, and the dominie may be.

ALDEN: 'Tis a large question, Master Jones, for I do not keep them in my pocket as a general thing.

JONES: Come now, Jack, be a good lad, and bring me to the governor, the captain, and the elder, for time and tide are pressing, and I would fain be gone.

ALDEN: And so would I, Captain Jones, for I was on my way to the Common house when thou didst stop me. But come with me and we will find the Fathers.

(Exit Alden and Jones. Enter Alden and Jones at other side of the stage. Alden is ahead and speaks in an undertone to Carver.)

CARVER: Good day, Captain Jones. John Alden tells me thou wouldst have speech with me.

JONES: Yes, Master Governor, and glad am I to find so many of your men here, for what I have to say concerns every man, ay, and woman and child in your settlement.

CARVER: In truth. And what may it be, Master Jones?

JONES: Tomorrow I am off for home, wind and weather permitting.

WM. BREWSTER (sternly): And God willing.

JONES (his eyes twinkling): If, as you say, God guides the wind and the weather, reverend sir, fair weather shows that He is willing, does it not?

✓ STANDISH: Since thy time is so short, Jones, perhaps thou'lt save it and tell thine errand at once.

JONES (turning upon Standish): Ho, my little Captain! Hard work and starving do not cool thy temper, do they? But, hold! 'Tis true I am scant for time, and mine errand is just this: ye have been good friends and true to me when I was in need, with my men half sick and ready to mutiny, and your women have made me believe in saints and angels. So I am come to offer such of you as will take it, a free passage home, if the men will help handle the ship, and the women cook, and nurse such as may be ailing. Or if you choose to load in your stuff for passage money I will trust Master Carver's word for the rest.

(Men look at each other.)

CARVER: Brethren, ye have heard Master Jones' offer and I doubt not ye agree with me that it is kindly and

generously spoken and meant. What say ye to it, man by man? Elder Brewster?

ELDER BREWSTER: I say, "Cursed be he who having put his hand to the plow turneth back."

CARVER: And Master Allerton?

ALLERTON: I will abide by the decision of the rest.

CARVER: And Master Alden?

ALDEN: I have no desire but to stay.

CARVER: Master Hopkins?

HOPKINS: I am here with all belonging to me, and here I abide.

CARVER: And Master Winslow?

WINSLOW: I and mine remain here.

CARVER: And thou, Captain Standish?

STANDISH: Our trumpeter has not been taught to sound the retreat.

CARVER: And Bradford?

BRADFORD: I fain would stay here.

CARVER: And thou, Doctor?

DR. FULLER: I' faith I see better hope of practice here than in the old country. I'll stay.

CARVER: And I have come here to live and to die. So you see, Captain Jones, that while grateful to you for your offer, we cannot accept. We thank you, friend, for your kind invitation to take passage with you for our old home, but not one of us will give up the hope of our new home. Not one among us having put his hand to the plow will turn back.

JONES (looking around slowly): Not one?

WM. BREWSTER (proudly): Not one.

Chorus (all): Not one!

HANSEL AND GRETHEL

[Dramatized by pupils of the sixth grade, under the direction of Miss Margaret Little.]

ACT I.

Scene 1.—Interior of Woodcutter's Home.

[To the right, two straw beds; in the center, table and stools. Grethel sits knitting and humming.]

HANSEL (entering with an armful of wood which he throws down in a corner): My, but I'm glad that's done.

GRETHEL (impatiently throwing down her knitting): O dear, I'm tired of working, too.

HANSEL: Come, let's have some fun. I'm hungry.

GRETHEL: I know where there's some milk, and you don't.

HANSEL: Milk. Oh, where is it?

GRETHEL: You never could find it.

HANSEL (at once beginning to hunt): You can at least tell me when I am warm.

GRETHEL: You're cold now, and colder yet. Now you're getting warm. Lood out, you'll spill it.

(Hansel puts his finger in to get a taste, then sets jug on the table.)

GRETHEL: Oh, you naughty boy. Mother will give us both an awful whipping. (She snatches the jug.)

HANSEL (running after her): It's my turn now.

(They are running about the room boisterously when the mother enters.)

MOTHER (angry and surprised): What do you mean by racing about the room in this way? (She sees the jug which Gretel is trying to hide, and snatches it.) How dare you touch that milk! And you have spilled half of it, and your poor father will have no supper.

GRETEL: Oh, was it for father?

MOTHER (angrily): Why, of course. Do you suppose I would have begged it from neighbor Miller for you?

HANSEL (picking up stools): We didn't mean to do it; really and truly we didn't.

MOTHER (still angry): Go to bed, you little wretches. You have done quite enough mischief for one day.

(They go to bed behind curtains and the mother sets the table with the remnant of bread and milk.)

(Enter father, tired and discouraged.)

FATHER: No—work to be had—Where are the children?

MOTHER: They were tired and went off to bed early.

FATHER: My—Wife, where did you get this good milk?

MOTHER: Those new people who just moved into the brown house across the way have a cow. I begged the milk from them.

FATHER: Did the children have some, too?

MOTHER: You may be sure they had their share—That is the last bit of bread in the house.

FATHER (going over to look at the children): Poor little chaps! They must be hungry all the time. What is to become of them?

MOTHER: Well, I'm glad you've begun to realize how bad things really are.

FATHER (sits down heavily): We can't let them starve.

MOTHER: They might beg—

FATHER: Beg from people who are as poor as we are! Never.

MOTHER: Well, then, listen to me. Many people are passing through the woods on their way to the county fair. We might leave them in the depths of the forest.

FATHER: Wife—how can you!

MOTHER: The children will think they are lost and will cry out. Then the travelers will take them to the village and care for them.

FATHER (tries to stop her): Wife, I—

MOTHER: Now you just wait till I have finished. When the hard winter is over we can go to the village and get them again.

FATHER (shaking his head): How can I part from my little ones!

MOTHER: Well, keep them here to starve if you want to. Perhaps you don't know that you are the only one who has had anything to eat for days.

FATHER: O, wife, is that really true? Then we must do as you say.

(She starts to put things away.)

MOTHER: I will give them this bit of bread for their lunch. (Exit the mother.)

(Father goes and looks at children and is greatly moved; he throws his coat over them for a cover.)

(Exit the father.)

(Children are not asleep and have heard all that was said. They sit up frightened.)

GRETHEL (beginning to whimper): Oh, I don't want to go into the woods and leave father.

HANSEL: Hush, sister, hush. I will find a way out of it.

GRETHEL: A bear might catch us.

HANSEL: I tell you, I'll go out and get some pebbles.

We can drop them along the way and find our way home by them.

GRETHEL: Oh, yes, that is a good plan.

HANSEL (tiptoes away and comes running back): The door is latched. It's too bad.

GRETHEL: I tell you what we might do. We might drop our piece of bread along the way.

HANSEL: Yes, that is a good plan.

(The children go to sleep.)

Scene 2.—Shady Spot in the Woods.

[Enter Hansel and Gretel, carrying a basket of berries.]

GRETHEL: Oh, what a nice shady place. Let's rest a little while. (They sit down.)

HANSEL: Oh, I'm so hungry.

GRETHEL: So am I. I wish we had the piece of bread we broke to find our way home with.

HANSEL: We might eat just a few berries.

GRETHEL: Oh, no. They are for father.

HANSEL: Then let's put them out of sight. (He hides berries by a bush.) Sister, I know father would like them better if we just taste them.

GRETHEL: Well—let us take just five each. (They count out five berries each with great deliberation.)

HANSEL: Won't father be glad to see us back again?

GRETHEL: Poor father. He felt pretty bad to have us go.

HANSEL: When I get big I shall do something splendid for father.

GRETHEL (timidly): Don't you think it's about time to—hunt our path?

HANSEL: Oh, no, it's much too early yet.

GRETHEL: It must be nearly sundown.

HANSEL: Come, sister, let's play a game. I'll play any one you like.

GRETHEL (eagerly): All right. Let us dance as we used to at Grandma's.

(Grethel begins to dance, singing from the *Opera, pp. 24-25.)

GRETHEL: "Brother dear, come dance with me", etc.

(Hansel follows awkwardly.)

GRETHEL: That's good, now let us try it again.

(As she begins to sing again a cuckoo is heard.)

HANSEL: I think we had better be hunting our path.

GRETHEL: No, no, we came from this direction. (She runs from the other way.) Oh, dear, I believe we really are lost.

HANSEL: Hush, don't cry. Let's call out. Halloo! Father! Mother!

(Echo answers.)

(Sandman appears and they are frightened.)

*HANSEL AND GRETHEL, a Fairy Opera, published by Schott & Co., London.

GRETHEL: Look. Who is that?

HANSEL: Quick, let us get behind that bush.

(They gradually fall asleep.)

(Sandman sings from the Opera, p. 91.)

"I shut the children's peepers and guard the little sleepers", etc.

(Sandman disappears and angels appear and group themselves around the sleeping children. Angels sing from the Opera, p. 91.)

"Angels 'round thee watch do keep", etc.

Scene 3.—The Woods.

[Hansel and Grethel are asleep in the woods as before. To the right the witch's house is visible; across from it, the bake oven can just barely be seen.]

GRETHEL (waking up): Oh, where am I? How fresh and cool it is here. (She sees Hansel still asleep and wakes him up with a bit of grass.) Wake up! Wake up, lazy bones!

HANSEL: How did we happen to sleep in the woods? Oh yes, I know now.

GRETHEL: I had the prettiest dream last night. There were angels all around us—

HANSEL (interrupts): Why, so did I.

GRETHEL: O Hansel, I feel so happy! I believe they must have been real angels.

HANSEL (seeing the witch's house, sits up suddenly, exclaiming): See! It's made of chocolate and gingerbread.

HANSEL: And the windows are of barley sugar.

(They creep nearer.)

GRETHEL: I am afraid to go any nearer.

HANSEL: Come on, sister, nothing will hurt you.

GRETHEL (growing bolder): We might break off just a tiny piece.

HANSEL (breaks off a piece and tastes it): M-m-, just have a taste.

GRETHEL (taking some of his piece): Is it good?

WITCH (inside the house):

Nibble, nibble, gnaw,

Who's nibbling at my little house?

CHILDREN (starting back frightened):

The wind, the wind,

The wind from heaven.

(Grethel picks up piece she dropped and starts to eat.)

HANSEL: Look. Mine is full of raisins and plums.

WITCH: Nibble, nibble, gnaw,

Who's nibbling at my little house?

CHILDREN (laughingly):

The wind, the wind,

The wind from heaven.

(Witch creeps around corner of house. She throws a rope around Hansel's neck.)

GRETHEL (snatches his piece of cake): Give me a piece of yours, you greedy Mister Wind, and there's a sample of mine. (She throws it at his feet.)

HANSEL: Ho, you little mouse. I'll catch you. Ouch!

GRETHEL (terrified): Run, run, there's a—witch.

HANSEL (tugging at the rope): Let me go! Who are you?

GRETHEL (coming to help him): You ugly witch, let my brother go.

WITCH: Come, I am not going to hurt you. I love little children better than anything else in the world.

HANSEL: Say, if you don't let me go I'll—pull, Gretel, pull, we can get away.

WITCH (enchants them, repeating rapidly several times):

Bumble, rumble, tumble, grumble.

Fumble, humble, jumble, mumble.

(She puts Hansel into a cage, leaving Gretel standing stiff. Witch goes around the house.)

HANSEL (whispering): Sister! Sister! Take care! Pretend to do everything she wants you to.

WITCH (comes back with a plate of food): There, dear little boy, eat I say, or woe be unto you.

(She disenchants Gretel, saying):

Bumble, rumble, tumble, grumble.

WITCH (continuing): Now, little girlie, go into the house and set my table. When you come back I have a surprise for you.

GRETEL: I don't know where your table is.

WITCH: You stupid thing! Right back there by the cupboard.

(Gretel leaves, and the witch goes over to look at Hansel.)

WITCH: Look at the lazybones! He's sound asleep. A fine little tidbit he will be. But first I will bake the little maid into a nice brown cake. I'll tell her to look at the cake in the oven, and in she'll go. Ha, Ha!

(She dances around on her broomstick, singing):

Hop, hop, gallop, gallop,

My broomstick's better than any old hat.

(Gretel comes running in.)

WITCH: Show me your thumb. Bah, how lean.

(Hansel sticks a small bone through the cage.)

WITCH (continuing): Grethel, quickly bring a cake for poor thin Hansel.

(Grethel does as she is told, and the witch goes to feed him. Grethel, seeing her wand, hides it.)

WITCH: Come, child, we must look at the cake in the oven.

(Grethel passes near the cage containing Hansel.)

HANSEL: Be careful. She is going to push you into the oven.

WITCH: Come here, child. Now just put your head into the oven and see if the cake is done.

GRETHEL: I'm so stupid. I'm afraid I shall burn myself.

WITCH: O, you foolish little one. Just try.

GRETHEL: Please show me how.

(Witch stoops down and Grethel pushes her in.)

HANSEL: Hurrah, Grethel! Good for you.

(Grethel goes over and lets him out. They take hold of hands and dance around.)

GRETHEL: Let's see what she had in her house.

HANSEL: Oh, yes, come on. Let's see.

(They start, and on the other side of the house they find a number of children standing stiff and straight.)

HANSEL: Hello! Where did you come from?

GRETHEL: Why don't you talk?

HANSEL: Maybe the old witch enchanted them.

GRETHEL: I have her wand. Let's try to set them free.

(They set them free, and while all the children are dancing, Hansel and Grethel's father and mother appear.

Hansel and Grethel, seeing their parents, run to meet them.)

MOTHER (running to children): Thank heaven, we have found you.

FATHER: We have hunted for you all day long.

MOTHER: And now we have found you, we shall never let you go again.

(All children take hands and dance about the father and mother.)

THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD

[Adapted from the text of Pyle's *Robin Hood*, by pupils of the sixth grade, under the direction of Miss Josephine Alice Seaman.]

In writing the play of *Robin Hood* the same general plan was followed as that outlined for the *Pilgrim Play*. After reading Pyle's version of the story, the characters were studied as they appear in legend and history. Pictures added their part, and illustrated editions of the book served to reveal more fully the fascinating personalities of Robin and his band. When the conversation could be adapted from the book this was done, but often it had to be supplied by the pupils. A few green branches were all the stage setting really required, but two of the boys devised an electrical contrivance whereby a camp-fire gleamed and faded at the proper time. By their ingenuity and skill they added much not only to the effect of this scene, but also to the pleasure of the children.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY.

ACT I.

In which Robin Hood turns butcher, enters Nottingham Town, and sells the King's own deer to the Lord Sheriff.

Scene 1. Road from Locksley Town early in the morning. Robin meets the butcher and conceives his plan to enter Nottingham.

Characters—Robin Hood, the Butcher.

Scene 2. The Market Place in Nottingham. Robin out-sells the town butcher, and is invited to the Sheriff's feast at the Guild Hall.

Characters—Robin Hood, first and second butchers. Other butchers and people of the Market Place.

Scene 3. The feast in the Guild Hall. Robin sells his horned beasts to the Lord Sheriff.

Characters—Robin Hood, butchers, Sheriff of Nottingham.

Scene 4. The road through Sherwood Forest. The Sheriff discovers his plight and Robin Hood retains the price of the King's deer.

Characters—Robin Hood, Sheriff, Little John, members of Robin Hood's band.

ACT II.

In which Robin Hood shoots before Queen Eleanor.

Scene 1. Forest of Sherwood. Late afternoon. The page, bearing Queen Eleanor's summons, arrives with Little John.

Characters—Robin Hood, Page to Queen, Little John, Will Stutely, Allan a Dale, members of Robin Hood's band.

Scene 2. The Shooting match in Finsbury Fields. Robin defeats the King's archers.

Characters—King Henry II of England, Queen Eleanor, Sir Hugh, Sir Richard Partington, Sheriff of Nottingham, Chosen Archers of King's guard, Herald and Page, Robin Hood and members of his band.

ACT III.

[After death of Henry II, Richard the Lion Hearted King of England.] In which King Richard visits Sherwood Forest.

Scene 1. The King's banquet. King Richard hears how Robin outwitted the Sheriff and plans to visit Sherwood Forest in the guise of a monk.

Characters—King Richard, Sir Henry of Lea, Sir Hubert, and other Lords of the Land, Sheriff of Nottingham.

Scene 2. The road through Sherwood Forest. Robin Hood meets the King in his disguise, and invites him to feast beneath the Greenwood Tree.

Characters—Robin Hood, Will Scarlet and members of the band, King Richard, Disguised Nobles.

Scene 3. Under the Greenwood Tree, Sherwood Forest. King Richard throws aside his disguise.

Characters—King Richard and Nobles, Robin Hood, Sir Henry of Lea, Sir Richard of Lea, Friar Tuck, Will Scarlet, Little John, all Robin Hood's band.

WHAT SHALL WE DRAMATIZE

The following list is suggestive only and should be varied to suit the needs of different classes. Material which may properly be used in the fourth grade of one school may just as properly be used in the sixth grade of another. When children are unimaginative and slow to comprehend the significance of history, the time is ripe for a history play, whether it be in the fourth or in the seventh grade. Many of these selections have been tested, and it is believed that all will be found to contain dramatic interest.

FOURTH GRADE.

The Golden Touch

The Three Golden Apples

The Chimaera

from The Wonder Book*Hazethorne*

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,

Selections*Carroll*

Old Greek Stories*Baldwin*

The Leak in the Dike.....*Cary*

Old Pipes and the Dryad*Stockton*

FIFTH GRADE.

King of the Golden River.....*Ruskin*

The Pied Piper of Hamelin.....*Broening*

Story of Siegfried*Baldwin*

Heidi, Selections*Spyri*

Story of the Rhinegold*Chapin*

Fifty Famous Stories, Selections	<i>Baldwin</i>
The Minotaur, from Tanglewood Tales.....	<i>Hawthorne</i>
Paul Revere's Ride	<i>Longfellow</i>
The Bee Man of Orne	<i>Stockton</i>
Columbus, Scenes in Life of	
Balboa, Scenes in Life of	

SIXTH GRADE.

Horatius at the Bridge	<i>Macaulay</i>
Christmas Carol	<i>Dickens</i>
Ivanhoe, Scenes from	<i>Scott</i>
Tanglewood Tales, Selections	<i>Hawthorne</i>
Greek Heroes, Selections	<i>Kingsley</i>
The Iliad, Selections	
The Odyssey, Selections	
Robin Hood	<i>Pyle</i>
Three Greek Children	<i>Church</i>
Story of Ulysses	<i>Agnes Cooke</i>

SEVENTH GRADE.

Rip Van Winkle	<i>Irving</i>
Little Nell	<i>Dickens</i>
Little David	<i>Dickens</i>
Legend of Sleepy Hollow	<i>Irving</i>
The Spy	<i>Cooper</i>
Courtship of Miles Standish	<i>Longfellow</i>
Historical Tales, Selections	<i>Morris</i>

Dramatization and presentation of historical and imaginary scenes in Puritan life.

Conduct of a town meeting on the Puritan model.
Continental Congress in session.

Incidents of Colonial Life.

Stories of the Revolution.

Discussion of "Taxation without Representation" by famous men of Revolutionary times.

EIGHTH GRADE.

Lady of the Lake*Scott*

King Arthur Stories. For material read:

King Arthur and His Knights*Radford*

Story of King Arthur*Pyle*

Age of Chivalry*Bulfinch*

Idylls of the King*Tennyson*

La Morte D'Arthur*Malory*

Knights of the Round table*Frost*

Julius Caesar*Shakespeare*

Merchant of Venice*Shakespeare*

The Tempest*Shakespeare*

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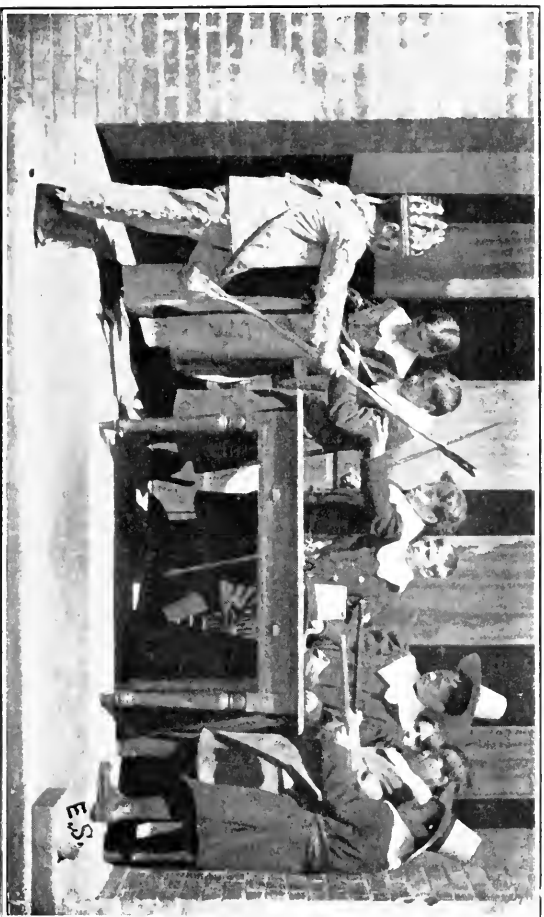
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THE PILGRIMS

Signing the Compact



THE PILGRIMS

The Receipt of the Rattlesnake Skin Filled with Arrows



ROBIN HOOD

Robin Hood Shooting in the Greenwood



ROBIN HOOD

King Richard Pardoning Robin Hood



THE QUEST OF THE HOLY GRAIL

The Knighting of Galahad



THE QUEST OF THE HOLY GRAIL

Starting on the Quest

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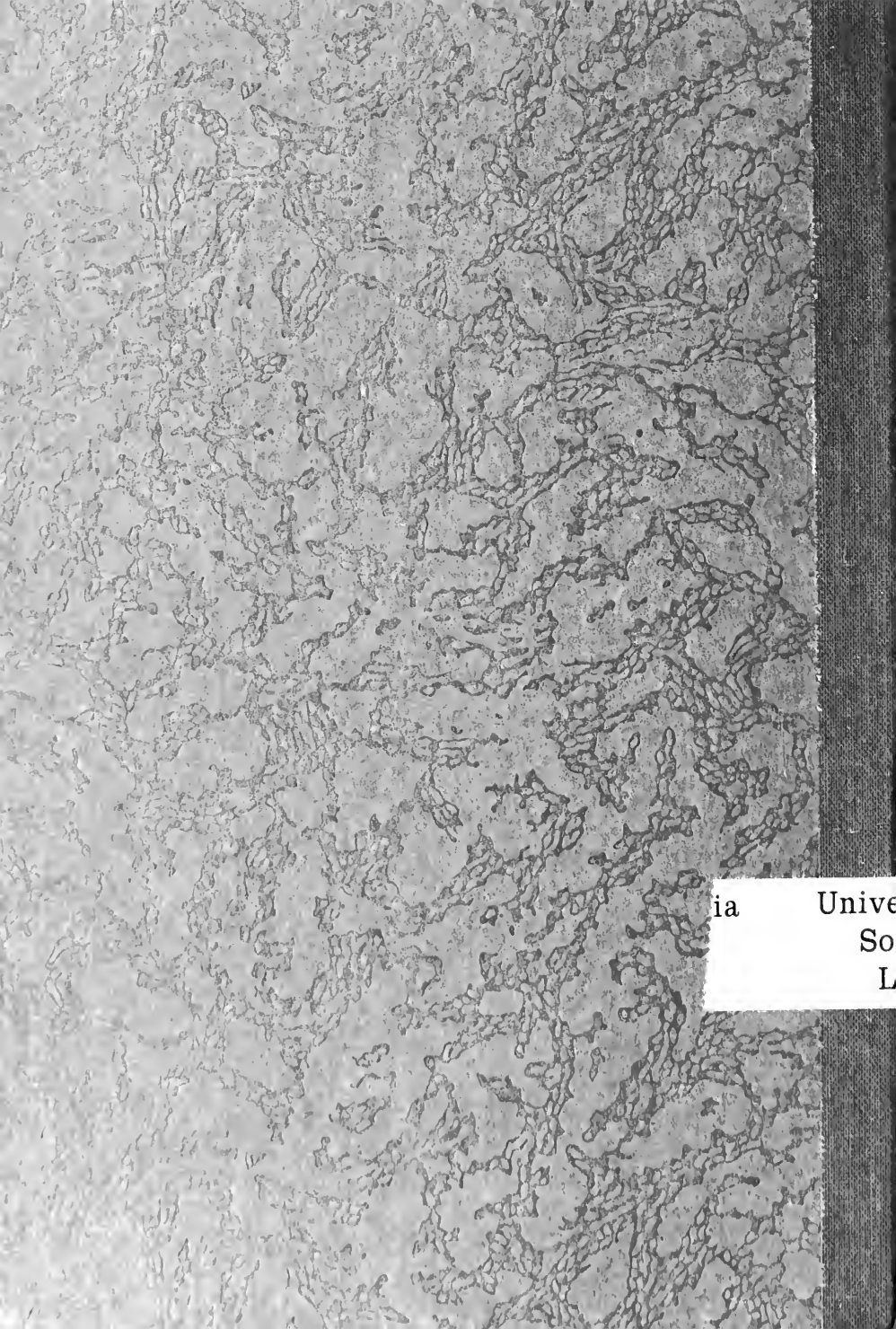


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